Action Plan

for SASKATCHEWAN WOMEN

– moving forward –

Saskatchewan
Our Future is Wide Open

104-00769/

Minister's Message

It is with great pleasure that I present the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*. This Plan, along with our continued consultation with the women's community and other partners, will guide our government in addressing women's equality issues in this province.

Equality for women is essential to ensuring Saskatchewan is a province with a wide-open future. The doors to women are open wider than ever before. More women are entering the workforce, obtaining higher levels of education and establishing careers in fields traditionally reserved for men. But barriers still exist and it is important that we work together until equality is achieved.

The *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women* will help us fulfill our goal of building a society where women's contributions are fully recognized and valued. A society where women have choices, access to opportunity and are free from violence, abuse and discrimination.

The information in the Action Plan comes from many sources. It highlights our achievements, as well as the actions we will take over the next few years. It sets out how we will measure the government's ongoing response to women's issues.

The Action Plan was developed around four main goals – Economic Security and Equality; Safety; Health and Well-Being; and Participation in Leadership and Decision-Making.

It uses a strategic and integrated approach – one that involves government, women and the women's community working together with a common vision.

Over the past year, we met with women from all regions of Saskatchewan and from many different social and cultural backgrounds. While they had different ideas about what needs to be done, they shared a deep-seated commitment to improving the lives of Saskatchewan women.

The *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women* will move women forward in every aspect of their lives – economic, social, political and cultural. It lays out our government's commitment to Saskatchewan women. We recognize and appreciate women's diverse contributions to the success and prosperity of this province. We know that there is considerable work to do before full equality for women is achieved. Working together in the months and years ahead, we will build a province where every citizen can participate fully and benefit equally.

Deb Higgins

Deb Higgins
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

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Highlights of the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*

Under the goal of economic equality and security, the Government of Saskatchewan will:

- Increase the number of partnerships that link employers to the Aboriginal community;
- Place priority on providing childcare space to women who are pursuing training or educational opportunities;
- Work with public service unions on issues related to workplace diversity and work-life balance;
- Improve the quality and cost of housing for low-income individuals and families;
- Streamline the process for enforcing support orders;
- Offer work and family balance tools for employers and employees to tailor more family-friendly workplaces.

Under the goal of safety, the Government of Saskatchewan will:

- Increase efforts to publicize employers responsibility for providing violence- and harassment-free workplaces;
- Develop a plan for increasing enforcement of ergonomic requirements;
- Explore steps to be taken to better identify and respond to the legal services and information needs of women;
- Develop and distribute new resource material on sexual harassment;
- Develop a Northern Justice Strategy to promote dialogue about the needs of victims and offenders;
- Support the implementation of a national sex offender registry to detect repeat sex offenders.

Under the goal of health and well-being, the Government of Saskatchewan will:

- Improve women's access to female health care providers in rural and remote areas;
- Enhance community supports for families of children with severe disabilities;
- Implement the *InMotion* initiative which will increase the level of physical activity of Saskatchewan people, including girls and women, by 10% by 2005;
- Continue to develop and implement the Northern Health Strategy;
- Expand home care to provide more community-based alternatives to institutionalized care;
- Provide further development and integration of alternative and traditional healing practices.

Under the goal of equitable participation, the Government of Saskatchewan will:

- Co-ordinate and support the delivery of gender-based analysis (GBA) training to key staff from across all government departments over the next three to five years;
- Hold an annual forum of women's groups, Advisors on Women's Policy, and government senior officials;
- Work with private sector companies, Crown corporations; and other partners to make the business case for increasing women's participation in senior decision-making roles;
- Give priority to increasing the number of directors on government appointed boards who are members of equity groups including women;
- Support the development of a Northern Saskatchewan women's network;
- Commit to supporting International Women's Day events annually.

A New Direction

On April 1, 2002, the Government of Saskatchewan introduced a new structure for addressing women's equality issues. The Status of Women Office was established as a separate unit in the Department of Labour and is responsible for providing strategic direction and leadership to government on policy direction that affects the status of Saskatchewan women. The Office supports the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and reports directly to the Deputy Minister of Labour.

The Status of Women Office works in partnership with all government departments, Crown Investments Corporation, and the community, to realize the goal of equality for Saskatchewan women. It is a single window into government for women, women's organizations and organizations that serve women. It provides cross-government policy co-ordination on women's issues, maintains links with the women's community and provides consultation for pay equity. It will also be responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress on the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*.

In addition to the Status of Women Office, the new structure includes Advisors on Women's Policy in all government departments and the Crown Investments Corporation, and a Senior Policy Advisor in the Cabinet Planning Unit of Saskatchewan Executive Council, whose roles are to facilitate a gender perspective with respect to programs, policies or legislation, and to identify and provide analysis on issues impacting women.

This new structure allows the government to be more strategic in dealing with women's issues. First, there is a centralized responsibility for the development of overall government policy as it relates to women's issues. Second, individual government departments and agencies are responsible for ensuring that women's issues are considered as an integral part of their policy development and decision-making processes. Third, all policies that need Cabinet approval must be assessed for their impact on women.

Through regular contact and consultations with the women's community, staff of the Office can ensure that Saskatchewan women's voices – their issues, ideas and solutions – are proposed when government develops policies, programs, and/or legislation that impacts women. As part of the implementation of the Action Plan, the Status of Women Office will coordinate a yearly forum, bringing together women's groups, the Advisors on Women's Policy and senior government officials.

Reflections on the Consultation Process

No attempt to create a plan for addressing women's issues would be successful without the collective experience, knowledge and wisdom of Saskatchewan women. For the past year, we have been meeting, talking and working to develop a shared vision and a viable framework for the Action Plan.

Initially, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women met with a number of women's groups to discuss the establishment of the Status of Women Office and the need for an *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*. It was an opportunity for these groups to voice their concerns and provide insight on some of their priority issues.

The Executive Director of the Status of Women Office has held numerous meetings with women's groups. Questionnaires were sent to more than 100 Saskatchewan women's groups, inviting them to provide recommendations on priority actions for government departments. The Minister Responsible for the Status of Women hosted a one-day Women's Forum in Regina. Over 65 women (representing 39 organizations) and 16 Advisors on Women's Policy attended.

The forum was an opportunity for participants to network, meet new people and work together on developing a framework for the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*. The vision, principles and broad goals that form the core of this Action Plan grew out of this collective work.

Only by engaging a diverse group of Saskatchewan women in the development of the Action Plan, can we ensure that our government is responding to the issues that concern women in this province.

The Framework

The Framework

Our Vision

Empowered women who have the opportunities and resources to influence and benefit from the social, cultural, political and economic life of Saskatchewan.

Guiding Principles

Accessibility – Women's participation in programs, services and resources that promote opportunity and status.

Equity – Integrating gender considerations into all government policy, legislation and program development.

Inclusiveness – Increasing the participation of all women in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities.

Partnership – Individual women, community groups and governments working together on policies, programs and issues that impact the status of women in Saskatchewan.

Respect – Using a gender-sensitive approach in the development and delivery of policies, programs and legislation.

Self-determination – Recognizing and supporting each woman's strength and ability to make decisions.

Goals

1. Economic equality and security of all Saskatchewan women.
2. Safety for all Saskatchewan girls and women in their homes, schools, institutions, workplaces and communities.
3. Health and well-being for all Saskatchewan women.
4. Equitable participation of women in leadership and decision-making in all sectors of society and the economy.

Goal: Economic equality and security of all Saskatchewan women

Objectives:

- Improved labour market attachment and earnings
- Increased participation and success for women in education and training programs
- Improved access to suitable, affordable and safe housing
- Increased compliance with spousal and child support orders and agreements
- Improved work and family balance for women

Objective: Improved labour market attachment and earnings

Why are we doing this?

By 2000 in Saskatchewan, women accounted for 46% of people with paid employment, compared with 44% in 1990 and 37% in 1980. The employment rate for women with children under the age of six at home (excluding lone parents) has more than doubled from 33% in 1976 to 68% in 2000. From 1996 to 2001, the number of lone parent families in Saskatchewan increased by 20% to 42,065 and women head more than eight out of ten of them.

Women head more than 80% of the 42,065 single-parent families in Saskatchewan.

Additionally, women with disabilities and Aboriginal women remain disproportionately under-represented in the labour force compared to other women and men. This is especially true for Aboriginal women with young children. More than one in three Aboriginal women with children under the age of six is looking for a job, but remains unemployed.

More women than ever are self-employed, however, they earn less, on average, than both self-employed men and women in general.

For many women in the paid labour force, pay equity or equal pay for work of equal value, remains an issue. In all areas of the work force wage gaps between men and women still exist. On average, women who worked full-time in Saskatchewan in 2000 earned 73 cents for every dollar earned by a man - $28,961 compared to $39,495.

Recent immigrants, in spite of their high levels of education, are concentrated in low paying service sector industries.

What are we doing now?

Average Employment Income of Full-time, Full-year Workers By Sex & Occupation, Saskatchewan 2000*

Occupation	Women's Employment Income as a Percentage of Men's
Clerical supervisors	79%
Clerical positions	83%
Senior government managers	88%
Senior managers in financial, communications and other business services	62%
Senior managers in health, education, social and community services	69%
Computers and information systems sector	89%

Average Employment Income of Full-time, Full-year Workers By Sex & Occupation, Saskatchewan 2000*

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*Statistics Canada 2001 Census

What are we doing now?

Through the *Building Independence program*, the provincial government is building supports for women and their families outside of social assistance programs. For example, the *Saskatchewan Employment Supplement* assists low-income parents, who are mostly women, with child-related costs of working.

The *Small Business Loans Association Program* has provided over $11 million in loans to women business owners and entrepreneurs since it commenced in 1989.

Through the *Aboriginal Employment Development Program*, the Government of Saskatchewan has signed a number of partnership agreements, which emphasize hiring based on merit, the removal of barriers to employment, improving Aboriginal retention rates, and identifying and developing business opportunities.

The *Aboriginal Management and Professional Internship Program* prepares Aboriginal candidates for work in the public service. Since 2001, 88% of the interns have been women.

In 2003-04, Saskatchewan created 580 new licensed child care spaces (including 80 spaces for children in vulnerable situations), increased child care subsidies and provided funding to 250 existing, previously-unfunded licensed spaces.

The 2003-04 provincial budget provides an additional $2 million to fund an array of supports intended to assist both women and men with disabilities to enter and remain in the workforce.

The 2003-04 provincial budget increased the Northern Development Fund to provide an additional $500,000 in loans for northern businesses.

The Government of Saskatchewan continues to implement pay equity, which now covers approximately 60,000 workers in government departments, CIC Crown corporations, Treasury Board Agencies, boards and commissions, SIAST, regional colleges and the health sector.

All departments and Crown corporations must now have an employment equity program. One of the targets is increasing the number of women in under-represented jobs (i.e. positions where less than 45% of the jobs are typically held by women).

The Government of Saskatchewan provided a $2 million increase to Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) for a three percent wage and benefit adjustment. A significant majority of workers in the CBO sector are women.

The Government of Saskatchewan has established a provincial Settlement and Integration Planning Council and four local Settlement and Integration Co-ordinating Committees in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert with representatives from government and non-government agencies serving immigrants at the provincial and local level. These bodies will provide an ongoing mechanism for information sharing, program co-ordination and consultation on issues affecting the settlement, adjustment and full participation of immigrants in the economic and social life of Saskatchewan and its communities. These bodies will develop work plans identifying initiatives to address high priority immigrant service needs.

The Government of Saskatchewan provided a $45,000 grant to the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA) to support the work of SAISIA and the participation by its member organizations in the provincial and four local planning and co-ordinating committees. The grant also provides financial assistance to SAISIA for the development of processes and tools for identifying immigrant's needs and goals, co-ordinating inter-agency referrals, identifying areas for enhanced orientation services to newcomers and developing information materials for newcomers about settling in Saskatchewan and programs and services available at the local level.

Future Actions

The *Aboriginal Employment Development Program* will maintain and increase the number of partnerships that link employers to the Aboriginal community. Emphasis will be placed on preparing workplaces to reduce barriers and increase access to jobs for Aboriginal women and men, with a view to increasing the number of both Aboriginal women and men who participate in the labour force.

The Aboriginal Employment Development Program will maintain and increase the number of partnerships that link employers to the. Aboriginal community.

The province will add 1,200 child care spaces in Saskatchewan over the next four years as part of the recently signed federal-provincial/territorial agreement on Early Learning and Care. Priority will be placed on providing child care spaces to women who are pursuing training or educational opportunities.

Small Business Corporate Income Tax Rate will be reduced from 6% to 5.5% on January 1, 2004, and to 5% on January 1, 2005.

The provincial government will make early learning and care for all young children a priority by fostering healthy child development wherever the child is and enhancing the comfort of parents who are working or taking training that their children are being well cared for. The priority will be for families who experience significant challenges, including disabilities and those who experience family violence.

The government will work toward enhancing the affordability and availability of child care for low-income working families, many of whom are single parents.

The provincial public service will continue to implement the Aboriginal Management and Professional Internship Program, to prepare Aboriginal women and men for management roles in the public service.

The government will work toward enhancing the affordability and availability of child care for low-income working families, many of whom are single parents.

The provincial public service will implement the new Corporate Human Resource Plan, which includes a goal of diversity, with actions to support an increasingly representative workforce at all levels of the public service.

The provincial public service will continue to work with public service unions on issues related to workplace diversity and work-life balance.

The Government of Saskatchewan will promote labour force attachment among low-income single parents by enhancing education and training opportunities, both prior to employment and continuing as they are employed. This could include working with employers to identify work issues of women in their labour force and determine what infrastructure supports would address these issues. Efforts will focus on those who are currently marginalized and require additional supports, particularly those with a history of family violence or disability.

The Government of Saskatchewan will explore "career laddering" involving women pursuing next step options within workplaces, enhancing their skills through such things as preparing a resumé appropriate for the next rung on the career ladder and coaching for interviews. This will include a focus on women with disabilities and how their employment can be better facilitated.

The Government of Saskatchewan will explore mechanisms to strengthen services available to immigrants in the province to facilitate their settlement, adjustment and full participation in our communities, including mechanisms for improving employment and career opportunities for immigrant women.

Shalene Pederson

I am a co-owner of Uforia, a small boutique on 13th avenue, specializing in new Canadian Lines, retro and vintage clothing. The majority of my customers are teens and young adults. My friend and I started this business four years ago when I was just 23 years old. Starting a new business wasn't easy. Women Entrepreneurs in Regina showed us how to prepare a business plan and how to apply for a loan. I found the banks were too hard to go through. We're young. We look young. We're female. They just didn't take us seriously. Women Entrepreneurs did.

I think that more young women should start businesses. In Saskatchewan, the market has not become saturated. There is still lots of opportunity for businesses to grow and thrive better than in other provinces. If I knew there was a young woman who wanted to open a shop, I would be more than happy to give her a hand.

I found the banks were too hard to go through. We're young. We look young. We're female. They just didn't take us seriously. Women Entrepreneurs did.

Objective: Increased participation and success for women in education and training programs

Why are we doing this?

Increasing women's participation and success in education and training will assist them in securing employment. Women with higher levels of education, have, on average, higher earnings. Women with post secondary education have higher earnings and women with less than high school education consistently earn less than women who graduate from high school.

What are we doing now?

There are a number of programs and services designed to encourage the interest of girls and women in non-traditional areas of study. One example is the *Girls Exploring Trades and Technologies (GETT)* science camps.

Increasing women's participation and success in education and training will assist them in securing employment.

In 2001, almost nine out of ten *Job Start/Future Skills* graduates obtained employment after completing the program – 41% of participants were women.

The *Provincial Training Allowance (PTA)* provides assistance to low-income adults enrolled in basic education and bridging programs. About two-thirds of those who receive PTA are women. *The Student Financial Assistance program* provides loans, grants and bursaries to students. As part of this program, additional financial support is provided to single parents – approximately 15% of recipients are single parents.

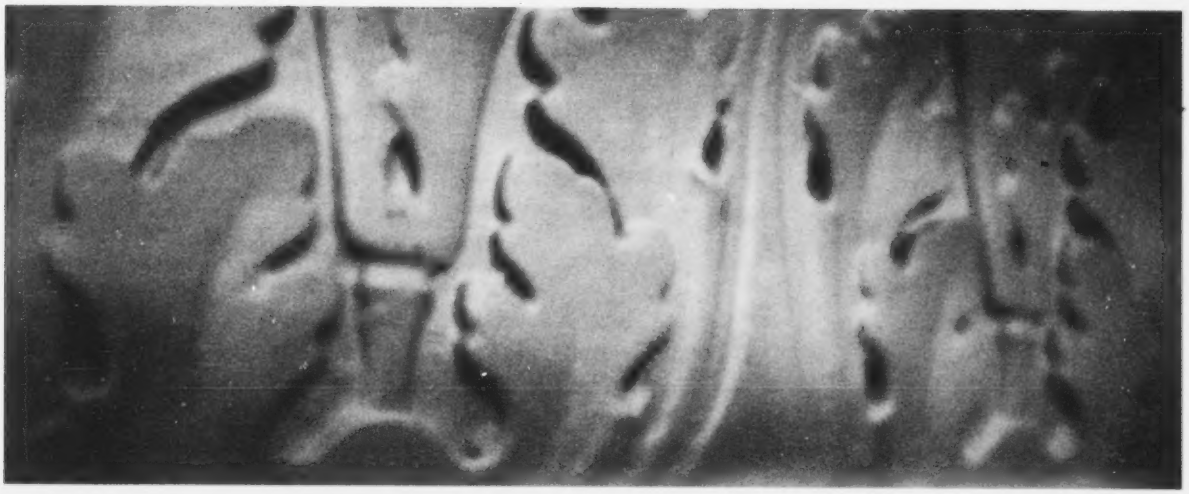
As part of the student assistance programs, the income exemption will increase from $600 to $1,800 for scholarships and $1,700 for part-time earnings for the 2003-04 academic year.

The Special Opportunity Grant for Women in Doctoral Studies provides a maximum of $5,000 per year on a first come/first served basis.

The provincial government provides bursary programs to support recruitment and retention of health professionals in Saskatchewan. The majority of bursaries have been awarded to women.

The Canada-Saskatchewan Study Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities provides up to $10,000 annually to full or part-time students to cover exceptional education costs related to a student's disability.

In 2003-04, the provincial government will provide funding for 300 first-year students at the College of Nursing (including 40 in the new northern nurse training program) and 60 first-year students at the College of Medicine.



Two Saskatchewan scientists lead research on climate change

Virginia Wittrock, B.Sc., M.Sc., and Elaine Wheaton, B.Sc., M.Sc., who are respectively, Research Scientist and Senior Research Scientist in the Climatology/Aquatics Section of the Environment/Minerals Division of the Saskatchewan Research Council, lead a multi-partner Prairie Provinces-wide project to assess the possible climate change impacts on prairie cities.

This project is the first in Canada to address this vital topic. It will provide important information to decreasing vulnerability as well as enhancing opportunities for cities in a changing climate.

This project is the first in Canada to address this vital topic.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan, in partnership with the broader learning sector, will seek to increase educational opportunities and achievements by women, particularly in areas of non-traditional study.

The province will support programs and services for women in training for, or who are working in, non-traditional occupations.

The Government of Saskatchewan will continue to strengthen supports for women and men with disabilities in the post-secondary education system to ensure that every person gets the education and training that supports best employment outcomes and ensures the economy has the work force it needs for future growth.

The Aboriginal Government Employees' Network in partnership with the Public Service Commission, Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs and Crown Investments Corporation, will launch a Speakers Bureau in Fall 2003 to encourage female and male students to stay in school and consider careers in the public service.

Women comprise the majority of persons living in poverty and social housing.

Objective: Improved access to suitable, affordable and safe housing

Why are we doing this?

Women who live in suitable housing in safe neighbourhoods are able to focus their energy on key demands in life, such as raising their children, earning a living or going to school. The reality is that some women-led households in Saskatchewan are in housing that is too expensive, too crowded, needing major repairs, or some combination of these factors.

Young Aboriginal women and children experience the highest levels of housing need. In Saskatchewan, more than four out of 10 Aboriginal women between the ages of 15 and 24 are in unsuitable housing. Forty-four percent of Aboriginal children 14 years of age and under are in need (in comparison to 11% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts). Female single parents, particularly those who rent their dwellings, are highly vulnerable, especially in their younger years, with six out of 10 being in need of suitable housing.

Women who experience violence in their personal relationships face serious housing dilemmas. The impact of violence on women's housing choices, and the direct impact this has on their mental health, is significant.

Many women continue to have irregular and inadequate income that impedes their ability to find adequate, affordable housing. Studies of the housing problems faced by low-income women show that the need to

continually struggle for appropriate shelter has the single worst effect on women's daily lives in terms of influencing self-esteem, relationships with children, ability to seek further education and employment; hence, the link between poverty reduction or enhancing women's economic security and addressing housing needs cannot be ignored.

Young women, particularly teenagers, who have been victims of violence have few resources in the community. Most shelters are established to support older women and/or women with children.

What are we doing now?

The Government of Saskatchewan has developed a five-year plan that will commit $49.9 million dollars to build 1,400 new, affordable housing units that will benefit low-income households, many headed by women.

Saskatchewan's social housing is an important resource for many women. Single-parent women receive priority access to these affordable, well-maintained homes.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan will work to improve the quality of housing for low-income individuals and families and the cost of that housing.

Objective: Increased compliance with spousal and child support orders and agreements

Why are we doing this?

Maintenance enforcement programs register cases, process payments and monitor cases. While child support guidelines are generally similar across Canada, each jurisdiction has developed its own policies and procedures. The majority of orders involve support for children and in 98% of cases the payer is male and the recipient female. Saskatchewan has the highest success nationally in collecting payments due. In 2001-2002, Saskatchewan collected 79% of the approximately $30 million due for that year.

What are we doing now?

The Maintenance Enforcement Office helps women collect maintenance payments on a regular basis; 95% of the Office's cases support women who are custodial parents. Saskatchewan has passed and proclaimed new legislation (*Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Act*) to improve recognition, and enforcement of support orders where the paying parent moves to a new province.

Saskatchewan is working with federal and provincial partners to update the Child Support Tables that set guidelines for the amount of money to be paid to child support.

The link between poverty reduction or enhancing women's economic security and addressing housing needs cannot be ignored.

Ultimately, social housing got me off social assistance. Eventually, I know that social housing will get me off social housing.

Val Marshall

Social housing has benefited my family in many ways. Social housing gave me the freedom to feel safe enough to leave my husband and still have a place to live. It also allowed me to look after my family's health. I had an opportunity to go back to school. During part of the program that I took, I was gaining work experience in the field while I was studying. As a result of this partial work experience, I was getting paid minimum wage.

Being in Social Housing allowed my rent to be based on my income and allowed me to get ahead a bit financially, even though I was only making minimum wage. Social Housing allowed me the opportunity to go back to school and better our lives as well as my career. I now have a full-time day job that pays me substantially better than what I was making in retail. Without Social Housing, I don't if I would have felt secure enough to do the things I did, yet not worry about how we would manage. Ultimately, social housing got me off social assistance. Eventually, I know that social housing will get me off social housing.

Future Actions

The Maintenance Enforcement Office will streamline the process for enforcing support orders by implementing a program of direct debit and deposit to make it easier for payers to make a payment and custodial parents to receive it.

The Government will expand mandatory parent education on divorce and family separation offered to parents to encourage child-centered resolutions in conflicts.

Objective: Improved work and family balance for women

Why are we doing this?

A woman's ability to obtain economic security through paid work is affected by her family responsibilities. More family-friendly workplaces and family members who share childcare and household tasks will help women who strive to work and still be satisfied mothers and grandmothers.

Although the majority of women today work in paid jobs, most women with families retain the bulk of the responsibility for child and elder care, cleaning, cooking, planning, coordinating and other family-related tasks at home. Women are more likely than men to take time off from their jobs to look after their children or elderly relatives and, as a result, often compromise their career and financial success. In response to the 1998 Saskatchewan survey entitled Towards More Work Family Balance in Saskatchewan, 75% of the men and 75% of the women in the sample of 5,426 people agree that the women in their homes have primary responsibility for child care.

Saskatchewan has the highest success nationally in collecting overdue maintenance payments.

What are we doing now?

Saskatchewan Labour's Work and Family Unit coordinates government activities on work-family issues and provides resources (www.workandfamilybalance.com) and hands-on consultation for Saskatchewan employers, employees, human resource professionals and trade unions.

Recently the Work and Family Unit co-chaired the Federal, Provincial and Territorial review of work-family policy and issues in Canada.

The Saskatchewan Public Service Commission and departments support work-life balance options, including flexible start and stop times, job sharing, variable hours, personal/family leave, and deferred salary leave.

In 2001, the Government of Saskatchewan expanded job-protected leave for birth mothers and primary caregivers of adopted children to 52 weeks. Birth fathers and spouses of primary caregivers are eligible for 37 weeks of combined job-protected parental leave. The Labour Standards Act now provides a couple with job-protected leave for a maximum of 89 weeks.

The federal government announced that effective January 4, 2004, compassionate care leave of eight weeks under the Canada Labour Code and six weeks under the Employment Insurance program will be available for employees to care for a gravely ill family member.

In response to the findings of the 1997/98 Public Task Force on Balancing Work and Family, the government established the Work and Family Unit within Saskatchewan Labour. The Unit takes a community-based partnership approach to work-family issues. Community-based networks that bring together business, labour, community and government now exist in Yorkton, Regina and Saskatoon.

Future Actions

Saskatchewan will review leave entitlements under *The Labour Standards Act* to ensure that employees can access job protected leave and compassionate care Employment Insurance benefits to care for family members who are critically ill.

Saskatchewan Labour's Work and Family Unit will be offering a set of made in Saskatchewan Work and Family Balance tools that employers and employees can use to tailor a more family-friendly workplace.

The Government of Saskatchewan will provide a trained consultant to assist workplaces that request hands-on training in using these work and family balance tools.

Goal: Safety for all Saskatchewan girls and women in their homes, schools, institutions, workplaces and communities

Objectives:

- Improved workplace health and safety
- Improved access to support services for women and children who experience violence
- Reduced violence against women and sexual exploitation of children

Objective: Improved workplace health and safety

Why are we doing this?

Very little is known about the effects of work on women's health and safety, despite the fact that about half of the workforce is made up of women. Historically, research on the work environment focused largely on industrial work, predominated by men. Today, there are many sectors where women are the predominant workers. Women are more likely to work in part-time or casual work, sometimes working more than one job at a time. Women often find themselves in non-permanent employment, and this has consequences in regards to reporting of accidents and injuries, as well as claiming for and receiving compensation.

Better information and research are needed about effects of work on women's health and safety. This is important because:

- Women are concentrated in certain occupations and industries, where specific risks apply
- Many women work on shifts and there is evidence that certain types of shift work pose health problems specific to women (e.g. subtle effects on pregnancy)
- There are physical and physiological differences between men and women
- Most women have the major responsibility for unpaid work in the home in addition to their paid work
- Musculoskeletal injuries resulting from lifting and handling (such as in the health care sector), work that involves standing for a long time (retail sector) and repetitive motion (computer keyboarding, data entry) continue to increase.

Harassment is a growing problem in the workplace that is affecting the health and safety of workers. The Government of Saskatchewan wants to be a role model for healthy and safe practices in the modern workplace.

Harassment in the workplace affects the health and safety of workers.

What are we doing now?

Occupational health and safety legislation provides that where a chemical or biological substance is present that may be harmful to a worker who is pregnant, has become sensitized to the substance or is unusually responsive to it, an employer shall:

(a) minimize the exposure of the worker to the substance or

(b) on the worker's request, assign the worker to less hazardous alternate work if available.

Saskatchewan's *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requires employers to protect workers from harassment, requires workers to not participate in the harassment of another worker and requires all employers to prepare and post a policy to prevent harassment in the workplace.

The provincial government consults with farm women on occupational health and safety on the farm through the Farm Health and Safety Council.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act requires all employers to prepare and post a policy to prevent harassment in the workplace.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan will increase efforts to publicize and monitor employers' responsibility for providing violence- and harassment-free workplaces.

The provincial government will develop a plan for increasing enforcement of ergonomic (the science of designing the workplace and the job to fit the worker) requirements, with a focus on the health care sector.

The Government of Saskatchewan will develop and distribute new resource material on sexual harassment.

The Government of Saskatchewan will develop training to raise awareness of the importance of actively working to eliminate sexual and other forms of harassment.

Objective: Improved access to support services for women and children who experience violence

Why are we doing this?

Violence against anyone is unacceptable. Violence against women is distinct from violence in general. According to the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women, "violence against women is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men, and to the prevention of women's full advancement."

Eleven percent of Saskatchewan women were victimized by a spouse in the five-year period ending in 1999. According to a 1993 study, one out of four women in Saskatchewan had experienced an assault by an intimate partner at some point in her life.

Aboriginal women have rates of spousal assault three times higher than non-Aboriginal women. Spousal homicide rates for Aboriginal women in Canada are more than eight times the rate for non-Aboriginal women.

What are we doing now?

The Government of Saskatchewan funds ten shelters, six agencies that offer support to victims of sexual assault and eight outreach programs.

In partnership with Regional Health Authorities, the government supports *Alternatives to Violence* programs for abusers in eleven major centres in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Housing Corporation gives priority housing placement to individuals coming from violent situations.

Saskatchewan Justice funds a number of initiatives that deal specifically with women and children who are the victims of violence. These initiatives include programs in three urban centres for children who witness domestic violence; eight programs in five urban centres that deliver services in a holistic way, with particular emphasis on the needs of Aboriginal victims, offenders and their families; two women's centres that respond to victims of sexual assault; and a domestic violence early intervention program. As well, victims services workers receive training in responding to situations of domestic violence.

The costs of violence against women in Canada exceed $1.5 billion a year.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan will continue to focus responses on meeting the needs of victims of family violence, particularly women and children.

The Government of Saskatchewan will explore steps to be taken to better identify and respond to the legal services and information needs of women.

Objective: Reduced violence against women and sexual exploitation of children

Why are we doing this?

The costs of violence against women in Canada exceed $1.5 billion a year. These costs include short-term medical and dental treatment for injuries, long-term physical and psychological care, lost time at work, and use of transition homes and crisis centres.

The rate of sexual offences reported to the police declined by 35% between 1993 and 2001. However, Saskatchewan experienced one of the highest provincial levels of sexual assaults. Over 80% of victims in sexual offences reported were female. Rates were highest among female teenagers and young adults.

Domestic violence is also a child-welfare issue. The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect indicated that children's exposure to family violence was the most common form of emotional maltreatment. There is a growing body of evidence on the negative effects on children of being exposed to family violence and how women's parenting can be affected by such abuse. Children exposed to family violence are more likely to become involved in abusive situations as adults – boys as abusive partners and girls as abused women. The majority of sexually exploited children are victims of child sexual abuse before they are involved in the sex trade.

Children exposed to family violence are more likely to become involved in abusive situations as adults.

What are we doing now?

The Government of Saskatchewan Funds and participates in *STOPS (Saskatchewan Towards Offering Partnerships Solutions)* to Violence, a province-wide initiative working to eliminate violence in the family. Participants include community organizations, interest and advocacy groups, the provincial government and individuals. STOPS has eight local organizations and over 125 members.

The Government of Saskatchewan sponsors community forums to help guide the development of government policy on issues such as the use of restorative justice in situations of relationship violence and victimization.

The provincial government actively participates in and has provided funding to RESOLVE, a tri-provincial research network working in the area of violence and abuse, which includes evaluation of current responses to family violence.

The provincial government continues to implement and evaluate the provincial strategy on the sexual exploitation of children and youth, the majority of whom are female.

The provincial *Child Abuse Protocol* was implemented in 1995.

The *Victims of Domestic Violence Act* has been in force since 1995.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan will be developing a Northern Justice Strategy to promote dialogue about the needs of victims and offenders.

Saskatchewan will support the implementation of a national sex offender registry to detect repeat sex offenders.

Goal: Health and well-being for all Saskatchewan women

Objectives:

- Improved access to quality health services
- Stronger health and well-being supports for individuals and families
- Promotion and support of healthy lifestyles for women and children
- Respected and improved culturally-appropriate services for women

Objective: Improved access to quality health services

Why are we doing this?

Access to quality health care services specific to their needs allows women to make decisions about their own health. Women have unique health care needs as individuals and as mothers. Obstetrical and gynecological services such as screening for cervical cancer, breast cancer, and bone density changes are essential to women.

The delivery of high-quality accessible health care to pregnant women and children has the potential to result in an increase in the number of women receiving prenatal care, decreased levels of fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects, decreased infant morbidity and mortality rates, and improved childhood growth and development. Women with newborns and young children benefit from supportive services that assist with the responsibilities and costs associated with raising healthy children.

Women benefit from having access to affordable health care for their own and their family's needs. Women who are experiencing economic insecurity may be unable to afford medications and prescriptions to care for their health or afford the cost of health care for their children.

Women who live in northern Saskatchewan report feeling cut off from services and cite a lack of health care services for victims of domestic violence, abuse and sexual assault. Counselling services are very hard to access, and often women have to travel great distances to receive this type of support.

In the period from 1997 to 2001, 3,156 cases of breast cancer were diagnosed in Saskatchewan women, accounting for 30% of cases of cancer in women.

The survival rate for breast cancer before 1945 was 42%. The survival rate was 86% in 2001.

A 1997 study identified that 40% of Saskatchewan women are not screened or are under-screened for cervical cancer.

The majority of women who do not receive adequate service live in rural or remote areas, have low incomes or are of Aboriginal ancestry.

What are we doing now?

The Government of Saskatchewan, through funding to a number of community agencies and partnerships among various government departments:

- Focuses resources on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and FAS Effects.
- Educates women, families and communities about the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy.
- Establishes addictions programs that give priority to women.
- Offers evening and weekend addictions programs so that working women have flexible arrangements for seeking treatment.

Approximately 35,000 Saskatchewan women between the ages of 50 and 69 participate in Saskatchewan Health's *Screening Program for Breast Cancer* each year.

Approximately 90% of the nearly 15,000 people who participate annually in Saskatchewan Health's *Bone Mineral Density Screening program* are women.

Through Saskatchewan Health, the *Special Support Program* of the Saskatchewan Drug Plan provides financial assistance to Saskatchewan residents with drug costs that are greater than 3.4% of their income.

Saskatchewan Health's Family *Health Benefit Plan* assists low-income working families to cover the cost of health care for children, including eyeglasses, dental work, special medical needs, medications and chiropractics.

The provincial government provides support to Regional Health Authorities for the *Successful Mothers Support* and *Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies* programs to improve the prospects for successful births and support breast-feeding.

The *Prevention Program for Cervical Cancer* was launched in January 2002.

The Government of Saskatchewan implemented the *Healthline* on August 1, 2003. This service will improve access for women and their children living in rural and remote communities to early intervention and chronic disease management information provided by health care specialists.

On September 1, 2003, *The Pharmacy Act* was amended to provide pharmacists the legal authority to prescribe emergency contraception.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan is developing Primary Health Care Services that will include a wide variety of services. By 2007, primary health care teams will serve 25% of Saskatchewan families and within 10 years the entire population will have access to these teams.

Dr. Lalita Malhotra

A family physician specializing in obstetrics, Lalita Malhotra was born in Delhi, India, in 1941. Following medical studies in India and Post-graduate work in the United Kingdom, she emigrated to Canada in 1975 and established her own practice in Prince Albert.

Dr. Malhotra's research and practice in obstetrics and gynecology have had a major impact in the Prince Albert area and Northern Saskatchewan. Her focus has been in women's health and she has a special interest in teenage and high-risk pregnancies due to poor health, nutrition problems and socio-economic status. The majority of her patients are northern Aboriginal people, for whom she has been an inspiration and a role model.

The majority of her patients are northern Aboriginal people, for whom she has been an inspiration and a role model.

The provincial government will improve women's access to female health care providers in rural and remote areas by increasing opportunities for Nurse Practitioners to work in these areas.

The primary health care networks will offer respite care and adult day care, in recognition of the need for the alternatives our changing society requires.

Objective: Stronger health and well-being supports to individuals and families

Why are we doing this?

Women with disabilities, the majority of whom have incomes below $15,000 annually, benefit from access to affordable services that increase their ability to care for themselves, live independently and improve their quality of life.

In 1996, 41% of the 80,000 Saskatchewan women 65 or older lived alone. 57% lived on less than $15,000.

Senior women also require services that are individualized. As age increases, so does the percentage of seniors who are women. In Saskatchewan, women make up 50% of seniors ages 70-74. However, by ages 75-79, women comprise 57% of seniors, and account for 64% of all Saskatchewan seniors 80 years and older. Services which assist them to live longer at home independently include the delivery of meals, assistance with health care needs, assistance with purchasing and taking prescription medications and other resources.

Extended families are an important resource to parents raising children. For families who experience challenges to parenting, extended families can be particularly helpful in keeping families together and raising healthy children.

Primary caregivers in families of children with severe disabilities tend to be women, who face extraordinary pressures in balancing responsibilities to their family, work and other societal obligations.

What are we doing now?

The 2003-04 provincial budget includes $150,000 to provide extended supplemental health benefit coverage by one year for individuals with disabilities who are moving from social assistance to employment.

The Centenary Fund will provide $715,000 to replace 13 paratransit vehicles.

Effective January 1, 2003, the non-refundable tax credit for seniors increased from $750 to $1,000.

Future Actions

Following the First Ministers' *Accord on Health Care Renewal* in February 2003, the government plans to expand home care to provide more community-based alternatives to institutionalized care.

Annabelle Kaukinen

Annabelle is a woman who has faced immeasurable challenges and has come out on top.

Being a woman with a disability has only made me a stronger, more determined woman. Until I was 20, I was told my situation would never improve. I would always be totally dependent on others for all my needs. Today, I am an independent woman living in my own home and employed in a good job. But it has not been easy. Stereotypical attitudes of people with disabilities are our biggest obstacle. But albeit slowly, society is becoming more educated and responsive as we become more visible and integrated into society.

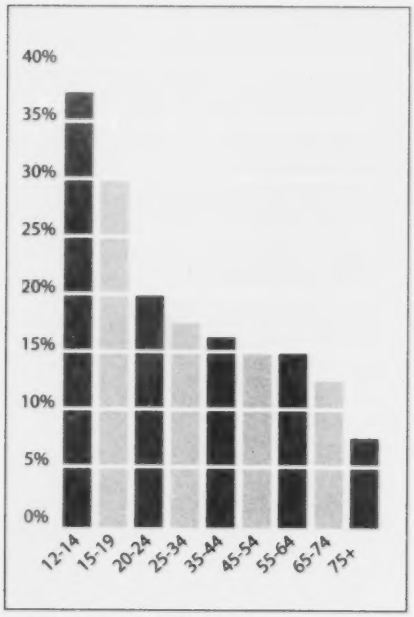
Persons with disabilities need the opportunity to show society what they can do instead of society focusing on what they cannot do. We have skills. We need to be included. It is my dream that eventually we will be provided the same respect as others and be treated as equal members of society.

As of January 1, 2004, Saskatchewan's personal income tax brackets, as well as the basic personal, spousal, dependent child and seniors supplement tax credit amounts, will be fully indexed to inflation.

The Government of Saskatchewan will encourage extended families as an important resource for families involved with child protection services, using Kinship Care to keep families together.

The Government of Saskatchewan will enhance community supports for families of children with severe disabilities.

Percentage of Saskatchewan Women Participating in Physical Activity



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census

Objective: Promotion and support of healthy lifestyles for women and children

Why are we doing this?

In Canada, statistics show that the percentage of girls and women who participate in physical activity declines steadily after the age of 12.

As many as 69% of Saskatchewan residents are insufficiently active for optimal health benefits. These benefits include reducing risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity, depression, heart disease and stroke, Type II diabetes and osteoporosis and gaining benefits such as reducing stress, increased energy and self-esteem.

As a province we can choose to actively support prevention and wellness initiatives in our communities. It is now well established that regular physical activity throughout a person's life has many health benefits. The government would like to see Saskatchewan become the healthiest, most physically-active province by Saskatchewan's 2005 centennial year.

Saskatchewan has a sport, culture and recreation system that plays a vital role in the development of our youth. Unfortunately the participation of Aboriginal youth in this system is low. Saskatchewan's successful future is dependent upon healthy, creative, involved young people. Aboriginal youth form a large part of our next generation.

A goal of the Canadian Sport Policy, that was endorsed by all Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for sport and physical activity in May of 2002, is that a significantly higher proportion of Canadians from all segments of society are involved in quality sport activities at all levels and in all forms of participation.

What are we doing now?

The Government of Saskatchewan has committed $5 million dollars to establishing a province-wide *In Motion* program.

The provincial government has committed $5.5 million dollars from the Centennial funding to the Aboriginal Participation Initiative.

The 2003-04 Tobacco Control budget of $584,000 supports enforcement of legislation regarding sales, advertisement and smoke-free public places, as well as public and business education and awareness initiatives.

Future Actions

The provincial government will implement the *In Motion* initiative which will increase the level of physical activity of Saskatchewan people, including girls and women, by 10% by 2005.

The Government of Saskatchewan will implement the *Aboriginal Participation Initiative* which will help to address the growing sense of urgency expressed by First Nations and Metis people about the need for preventative sport, culture and recreation programs and services for Aboriginal children and youth, including young females.

The Government of Saskatchewan will work with Federal, Provincial and Territorial colleagues and the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity in the development of a Canadian Strategy on Women and Girls in Sport and Physical Activity.

The Government of Saskatchewan will work with Federal, Provincial and Territorial colleagues to advance priorities for collaborative action under the Canadian Sport Policy that increases opportunities in coaching, officiating and volunteer leaderhip for women, persons with a disability, Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities.

Individuals of different backgrounds have different health concerns.

Objective: Respected and improved culturally-appropriate services for women

Why are we doing this?

An understanding that each individual has unique ideas and needs when it comes to health care and healing has led to changes in the traditional medical model. As well, research has identified that individuals of different backgrounds have different health concerns.

Changes to the traditional medical model mean a wider range of services reflecting the diverse and changing needs of the province's residents. These services foster physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Benefits of regular physical activity:

- Reduces smoking, drug and alcohol use among teenagers
- Decreases risk of teen pregnancy
- Improves strength and endurance
- Helps build healthy bones and strong muscles
- Helps control body weight
- Reduces anxiety and stress
- Increases self-esteem
- May improve blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels
- Reduces the risk of diabetes

What are we doing now?

The Métis and Off-Reserve First Nations People Strategy (Framework for Cooperation) was formalized as the provincial response to the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples with an emphasis on four areas: success in learning; preparing Aboriginal people for work; jobs and economic development; and individual and community well-being. Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs manages this initiative and there are 12 departments involved in this work.

Saskatchewan provides $650,000 annually for diabetes initiatives. While the total number of clients participating in diabetes prevention programs in Saskatchewan is not available, the majority of participants thus far are women. Each Regional Health Authority will submit a Primary Health Care Plan that will include a plan for the delivery of services for people with diabetes.

The government supported the development of a provincial diabetic foot program that standardizes evaluation and treatment of diabetes-related wounds on the feet.

The Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority offers a Native Health Services Centre in the Regina General Hospital.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan will continue to develop and implement the *Northern Health Strategy* in partnership with northern health regions, the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority and Health Canada.

The *Northern Health Strategy* and implementation of the primary care networks will provide for further development and integration of alternative and traditional healing practices in the health care of Aboriginal people.

Saskatchewan will expand primary health care services in partnership with First Nations and Métis peoples and will give priority to areas with high-risk populations. The government recently hired an Aboriginal Diabetes Consultant who will provide support for the development and coordination of services for people with diabetes.

A new hospital will be built in Fort Qu'Appelle that will offer space for First Nations health services, including a spiritual center, shared vision center and a winter healing lodge.

Jean Bellegarde

For the past 14 years, Jean Bellegarde has facilitated the creation of a culturally appropriate hospital for First Nations peoples. Jean works for the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council and is Director of the First Nations Health Services Program.

A large part of my work in facilitating the new Fort Qu'Appelle Indian Hospital has been active liaison between Elders, Chiefs and the federal and provincial governments. I am pleased that the new hospital is finally under construction. The hospital will combine Western and traditional medicines and techniques and is open to both First Nations and non-First Nations peoples. The goal of the hospital is to provide a holistic approach to health that will offer programs that are culturally sensitive to First Nations peoples. These programs will address healing of the spiritual, emotional, physical and mental well-being of patients by restoring First Nations identity and building self-esteem. Women have traditionally been the keepers and gathers of medicine and caregivers in society. Participation in the new health care system will strengthen women in the community as they learn, then teach others about the role of parenting and care giving. They will help young moms and give guidance as grandmothers.

Participation in the new health care system will strengthen women in the community.

Goal: Equitable participation of women in leadership and decision-making in all sectors of society and the economy

Objectives:

- Improved capacity in the Government of Saskatchewan to make decisions that result in equitable outcomes for women
- Increased representation of women in leadership, senior decision-making and non-traditional roles in all sectors and communities
- The achievements of Saskatchewan women are honoured, promoted, recognized and celebrated

Women have valuable contributions to make as leaders and decision-makers in our province.

Objective: Improved capacity in the Government of Saskatchewan to make decisions that result in equitable outcomes for women

Why are we doing this?

Women have not been adequately represented in the decision-making processes of government. The *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women* commits to a process that will give women a stronger voice in decision-making. It will also develop public policies that will contribute to changes that support women in their many roles.

Consultations with women's groups during the development of the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women* revealed that they viewed training in gender-based analysis (GBA) for the Advisors on Women's Policy as essential to the successful integration of women's issues into the policy-making process.

More appropriate and effective policies and programs can be achieved through gender-based analysis. GBA is a tool that promotes a comprehensive, integrated concept of equality. It allows us to better understand social processes and to highlight the factors that affect women and girls differently from men and boys. It also helps us develop equitable policies, programs, and legislation that take into account the lives of women and men, girls and boys. In addition, GBA responds to the requirements of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Federal Plan for Gender Equality*, The *Canadian Human Rights Act* and various international obligations and commitments.

What are we doing now?

In November 2002, the Government of Saskatchewan, through the Status of Women Office, held a forum for women's organizations and organizations that serve women. The forum provided women with the opportunity to identify their priorities to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and other key decision-makers.

Advisors on Women's Policy, as well as all policy advisors at Executive Council and in Crown corporations, have already received GBA training.

Future Actions

The Status of Women Office will co-ordinate and support the delivery of gender-based analysis (GBA) training to key staff from across all government departments over the next three to five years.

Advisors on Women's Policy will be appointed in all CIC Crown corporations.

The provincial government will ensure that all decisions that come before Cabinet have a gender lens applied by analysts when they consider the situation to be addressed and the solutions being proposed.

The Government of Saskatchewan will hold an annual forum of women's groups, Advisors on Women's Policy, and government senior officials.

The Government of Saskatchewan will hold an annual forum of women's groups, Advisors on Women's Policy, and government senior officials.

Objective: Increased representation of women in leadership, senior decision-making roles in all sectors and communities

Why are we doing this?

Women have a valuable contribution to make as leaders and decision-makers in their own lives, within their families, their places of work, and their communities and in this province. Opportunities to get involved as leaders and decision-makers and strong support systems to sustain this involvement will ensure participation from the women of this province.

As more women from all cultural backgrounds and walks of life become leaders and decision-makers, the potential improves for creating cultural and institutional change that reflects women's experiences and challenges.

While the percentage of women in management positions in the public service increased from 27% to 35% between 1992 and 2003, we still have work to do to increase women's representation in management. In addition, the government needs to ensure that all women, including Aboriginal women, women with disabilities and visible minority women, are represented in all aspects of the public service.

The business case for increasing women's involvement in senior management is a strong one.

The business case for increasing women's involvement in senior management is a strong one. An American Management Association study found that firms where women hold the majority of senior executive positions show the largest sales growth. In 1997, these firms averaged 23% growth compared with an average of 13% for firms where men were predominant. The November 2001 issue of the *Harvard Business Review* presented research that tracked financial returns of 215 Fortune 500 firms. Those companies with the highest percentage of female executives delivered earnings far in excess of the median for other large firms in their industries.

The 2001 Catalyst Census of Women Board of Directors of Canada shows that Saskatchewan leads the country in the percentage of seats held by women directors in Canadian-owned Financial Post FP500 companies. Of the 11 FP500 companies headquartered in Saskatchewan, women directors comprise 19% of their boards. This compares to 11% in British Columbia, 10% in both Ontario and Quebec, and 8% in Alberta.

The government has moved forward in the area of employment equity, a program designed to ensure workplaces are representative of Saskatchewan's working age population. The program involves identifying and removing barriers that have kept designated groups from receiving fair and equal access to job opportunities. Four designated groups have been identified as having been discriminated against or faced unfair disadvantages in the workplace. These are women in management and non-traditional occupations, persons of Aboriginal ancestry, persons with physical and mental disabilities, and members of visible minority groups.

What are we doing now?

All government departments and Crown corporations must have an employment equity program. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission sets the employment equity goals for designated groups in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan provides support to the Aboriginal Women's Program to help provincial Aboriginal women's organizations undertake projects and policy development activities.

Future Actions

The Government of Saskatchewan will work with private sector companies, Crown corporations, and other partners in Saskatchewan to make the business case for increasing women's participation in senior decision-making roles.

Priority will continue to be given to increasing the number of directors on government appointed boards who are members of equity groups including women.

The Government of Saskatchewan will work with community organizations to establish *The Rural Leadership Development Program*, with emphasis on women, Aboriginal peoples and youth.

The *Aboriginal Women's Program* will continue to enable provincial Aboriginal women's organizations to undertake special projects and policy development activities of benefit to their respective members.

The provincial government will continue to increase the representation of women in management, from the 2003 level of 35% to its long-term goal of 45%.

The Government of Saskatchewan will support the development of a Northern Saskatchewan Women's network.

Objective: The achievements of Saskatchewan women are honoured, promoted, recognized and celebrated

Why are we doing this?

Saskatchewan provides various awards for recognizing excellence, achievement, and contributions to the social, cultural and economic well being of the province. This recognition is a way to express gratitude to the leaders, mentors and role models of this province. Women play a key role in the economic, social, political, and cultural development of Saskatchewan and need to be recognized for their leadership and personal activity.

What are we doing now?

The Government of Saskatchewan, through the Saskatchewan Honours and Awards Program, recognizes and celebrates women's achievements.

An agreement with SaskSport Inc. to support sport, culture and recreation extends through to March 31, 2006.

The provincial government supports women's groups and other community-based organizations planning International Women's Day Celebrations.

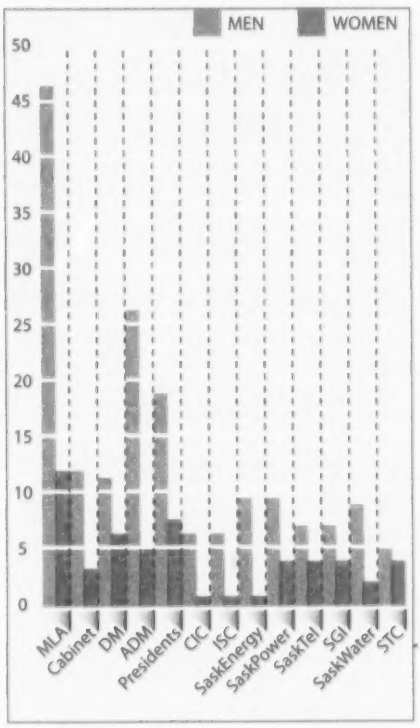
Future Actions

Saskatchewan will facilitate the number of women recognized through the Saskatchewan Honours and Awards Program, paying particular attention to the diversity of women in the province.

The Government of Saskatchewan will undertake a review of how lottery funds currently serve women in the areas of sport, culture and recreation during the life of the existing lottery license agreement which expires on March 31, 2006.

The province will commit to supporting International Women's Day events annually.

Women's Representation in Government and on Various Boards of Crown Corporations, 2003



Source: Government of Saskatchewan

Appendix: Profile of Saskatchewan Women

Aboriginal Women

- According to the 2001 Census, just under 14% of Saskatchewan women were Aboriginal. Aboriginal women are younger: 57% of Aboriginal females are under the age of 25, compared to 32% of non-Aboriginal females.
- In 2000, the average income of Aboriginal women in Saskatchewan was $14,548 compared to $21,188 for non-Aboriginal women and $17,534 for Aboriginal men.
- In the 10 years, 1991-2001 the number of Aboriginal women with university education increased from 3% to more than 8%.
- The labour force participation rate for Aboriginal women between 25 and 34 years of age was 56% in 2001, compared to 83% for non-Aboriginal women in the same age range. For Aboriginal women 35 to 44 years of age, the rate was 67%, compared to 87% for non-Aboriginal women.
- The unemployment rate for Aboriginal women in 2001 was 19.1%, compared to 4.4% for non-Aboriginal women.

Immigrant Women

- According to the 2001 Census, 25,295 immigrant women lived in Saskatchewan. Forty-five percent of Saskatchewan's immigrant women arrived in Canada before 1971, while 40% arrived after 1980. More recent immigrants have predominantly come from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Central and South America.
- According to the 1996 Census, 43% of immigrant women arriving after 1980 had a post-secondary degree, diploma or certificate, compared to 37% of non-immigrant women.
- Many recent immigrants (women arriving after 1980) work in business, health and other occupations.
- Despite their high levels of education, recent immigrants are concentrated in low paying service sector industries. The 1996 Census found that the unemployment rate for recent immigrants (10%) was much higher than for non-immigrant women (7%) or women who migrated before 1980 (3 to 4%).

Lone Parent Women

- In 2001, there were 42,065 lone parent families in Saskatchewan. More than eight out of 10 are headed by women and their families are larger, on average, than those headed by men. More than one in five children in Saskatchewan (22%) were being raised in a lone parent family in 2001.
- Fifty-five percent of lone parent women, compared to 63% of lone parent men have one child at home; 28% of the women have two children, compared to 26% of the men, while 18% of the women have three or more children living at home, compared to 11% of the men.

- The average family income in 2000 for families led by lone parent women was $28,473, compared to $38,374 for families led by lone parent men. The average family income for families headed by a couple was $62,023.

Rural Women

- The 2001 Census of Agriculture indicated that 23% of Saskatchewan's 50,595 farms were headed in partnership with women and 3% of all farms were operated solely by women.
- In 2001, rural women (excluding women living on reserve) had average annual incomes of $18,718, compared to $21,707 for women living in urban areas and compared to $28,205 for rural men (excluding men living on reserve).

Senior Women

- Seniors make up an increasing portion of Saskatchewan's population. In 2001, adults 65 and over represented 15.1% of the total population.
- Women significantly outnumber men among seniors. Women make up 57% of all seniors and 67% of those 85 years-of-age and older. Very few senior women are Aboriginal.
- Between 1996 and 2001, the seniors' population grew by more than 1%, with the increase in senior females being just under 2%. The population of senior women over 90 years of age grew by 22% in the same period.
- In 2000, senior women had annual total incomes of $18,801 compared to the average of $28,382 for senior men.

Visible Minority Women

- In 2001, 13,405 or slightly less than 3% of Saskatchewan women were members of a visible minority group.
- Forty-one percent of visible minority women were born in Canada. The largest visible minority groups in Saskatchewan are Chinese, South/Southeast Asian, Black and Filipino. On average, visible minority women are younger than other Saskatchewan women.
- In 1996, the unemployment rate for visible minority women was 9%, compared to the provincial average for women at 7%. In 1995, incomes for visible minority women were below the average for all Saskatchewan women - $13,400 compared with $15,800.
- Visible minority women in Saskatchewan have higher levels of education than Saskatchewan women in general. In 1996, 22% of visible minority women had a university degree, compared to 10% of all Saskatchewan women.

Women with Disabilities/Activity Limitations

- In 2001, the rate of disability in Saskatchewan was the second highest in Canada at 14.5%. The likelihood of having a disability increases with age, and in 2001, Saskatchewan had the highest proportion of persons aged 65 years and over of all the provinces.

- The disability rate for women over 15 years of age is 18%, compared to 17% for men. Forty-five percent of senior men have a disability, compared to 44% of senior women.
- Women with activity limitations had lower labour force participation rates across all ages. In 1996, 26% of women with activity limitations were in the labour force, compared to 66% of women without activity limitations.
- In 1995, on average, women with activity limitations had average annual incomes of $13,700 compared to $15,800 for all Saskatchewan women.

Violence Against Women

- One in four women in Saskatchewan has experienced violence at the hands of a current or former spouse.
- In 2000, there were 189 residents in shelters in Saskatchewan; 41% were women and 59% were dependent children. Ninety-six percent of women residing in shelters were victims of abuse. A high percentage of women who use shelters are of Aboriginal ancestry.
- Saskatchewan five-year prevalence rates for spousal assaults are virtually identical to the national average in that 11% of Saskatchewan women were victimized by a spouse in the five years ending in 1999, compared to 12% of women.
- A Government of Saskatchewan Omnibus Survey conducted in 2001, found that 85% of Saskatchewan residents considered family violence an important public issue and 88% agreed that it is a criminal act.
- Average spousal homicide rates between 1974 and 2000 were 1.44 per 100,000 couples for Saskatchewan women and .71 for Saskatchewan men.
- Aboriginal women in Canada have higher average rates of spousal assault - twice as high as Aboriginal men and three times higher than non-Aboriginal women and men.

Education

- Education levels for Saskatchewan women are increasing more quickly than among men. The percentage of women with at least some post-secondary education increased from 29% to 46% between 1976 and 1996, compared with 25% to 40% for men.
- In 2001, 22.6% of both men and women between the ages of 25 and 64 had a university degree, diploma or certificate. In the same age group, 23.4% of men and 22% of women had less than high school.
- On an hourly basis, women with university degrees earned 83% of what men with university degrees earned.

Employment

- In 2000, women accounted for 46% of people with paid employment, compared with 37% in 1980.

- In 2000, 39% of women worked part-time (less than 30 hours per week), compared with 20% of men, and one in every 10 women in the Saskatchewan labour force holds two or more jobs simultaneously.
- In 2000, women working on a full-time, full-year basis earned 74.4% of what men working on a full-time, full-year basis earned. This compares with 66.8% in 1980.
- In 2000, women held 63% of public sector jobs and 44% of private sector jobs. Women represent 32% of the self-employed (including farmers).

Income

- In 2000, the average income of adult women (over 15 years of age) was $20,496, compared to $31,323 for males over 15 years of age.
- In 2000, half of adult women had incomes under $16,000, while half of adult men had incomes of $25,250 or under.
- In 1999, 69% of women's income was from employment - 64% from wages and salaries and 5% from self-employment. Government transfer payments, such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement, Social Assistance, the GST Credit, the Child Tax Benefit and Workers Compensation, represented 20% of women's income.

Unpaid Work

- In 2001, 13% of Saskatchewan women spent 60 hours or more on unpaid child care per week, compared with less than 5% of men.
- In 2001, 29% of women between the ages of 25-44 spent more than 60 hours per week on unpaid child care in comparison to less than 10% of their male counterparts.
- Women aged 45-64 were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to spend 10 or more hours per week on unpaid care to seniors in 2001.

Sources:

1996 Statistics Canada Census
1999 Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey
1999 Survey of Consumer Finances & Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics
2000 Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey
2001 Statistics Canada Census
2001 Government of Saskatchewan Omnibus Survey
2002 Assessing Violence Against Women: A Statistical Profile

Saskatchewan Labour

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